

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 remain pending. Applicant has amended claims 9, 24, 29, and 32.

In the Non-final Office Action mailed on November 29, 2005, the Examiner considered the Information Disclosure Statement ("IDS") filed January 22, 2002; rejected claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; allowed claims 1-31 and 33; and stated that claim 32 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 1-31 and 33.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection to claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.¹ To advance prosecution, however, Applicant has amended claim 32 to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and to therefore place the claim in condition for allowance.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Office Action mailed November 29, 2005 indicates that the Examiner considered Applicant's Information Disclosure Statement filed January 22, 2002. However, the Office Action contains no indication that the IDS filed October 22, 2001 was considered. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner indicate that the IDS filed October 22, 2001 was considered. For the Examiner's convenience, Applicant has

¹ The Office Action may contain statements characterizing the related art, case law, and claims. Regardless of whether any such statements are specifically identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statements in the Office Action.

enclosed a photocopy of the date-stamped postcard from the USPTO, a replication of the IDS filed on October 22, 2001, and copies of the foreign patent documents and non-patent literature.

Amendments to claims 9 and 29

Applicant has amended claims 9 and 29 to correct typographical errors.

Rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner rejected claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, stating "[t]his claim should be cancelled or amended with the correct dependency" (Non-final Office Action at 2). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In order advance prosecution of this application, however, Applicant has amended claim 32, as required by the Examiner. Support for the amendment to claim 32 can be found at least on pages 11 through 18 of the specification. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and an indication that claim 32 is allowable.

Furthermore, though not required by the Examiner, Applicant has amended allowable claim 24 in a manner similar to claim 32.

Conclusion

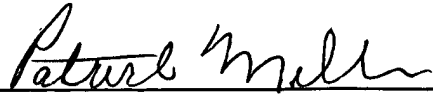
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 28, 2006

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Enclosures (5)